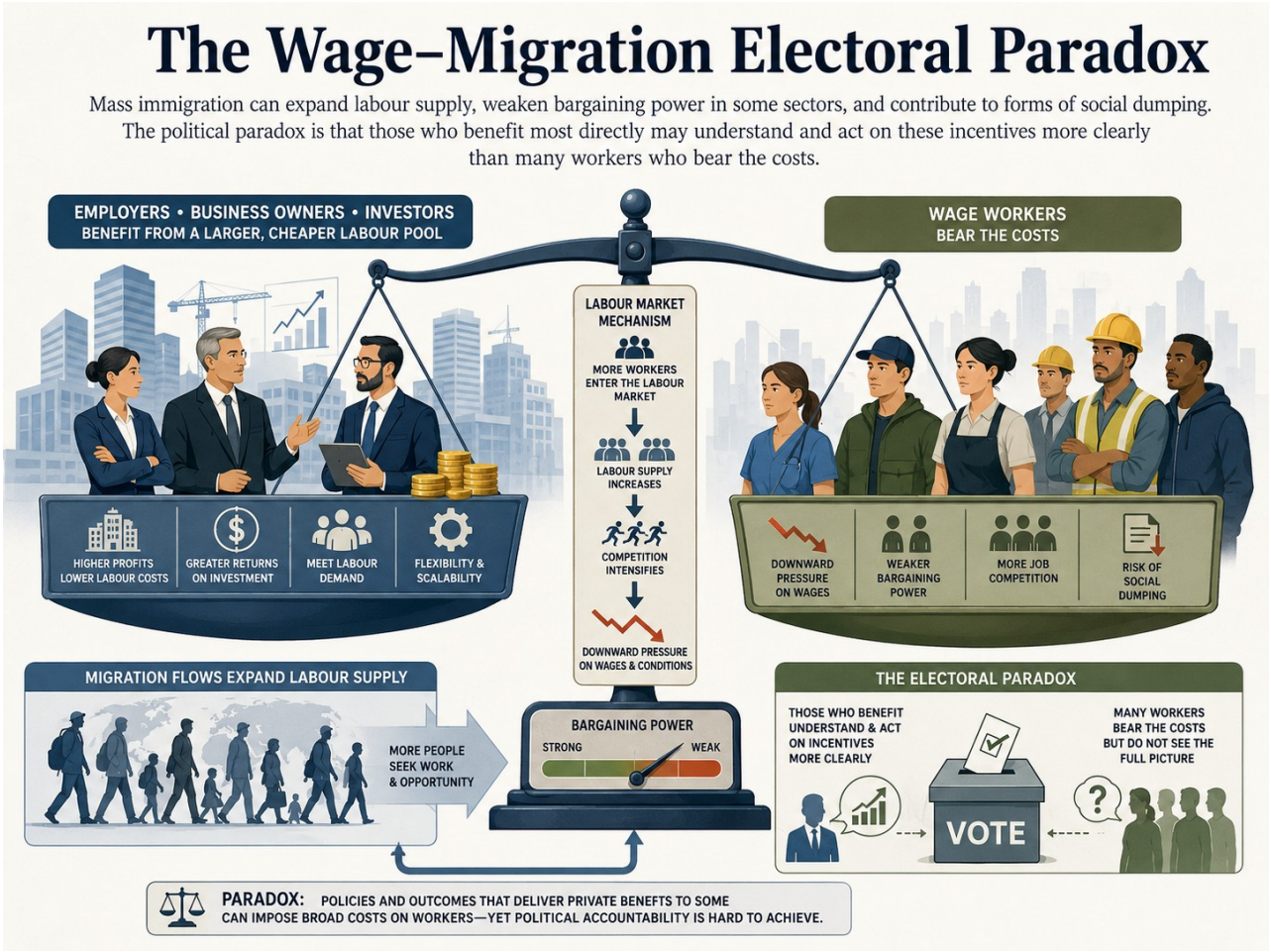
The Wage–Migration Electoral Paradox

Xema Gatnau

Context

Large-scale immigration increases labour supply and, in sectors where incoming and incumbent workers are close substitutes, can intensify competition for jobs, weaken bargaining power, and place downward pressure on wages or working conditions. At the same time, employers and investors may benefit from a larger labour pool and lower or more flexible labour costs.



Conceptual illustration of the labour-market and electoral mechanism.

Core formulation

The clear paradox is that those who understand how mass immigration can expand the labour supply, restrain wages, and facilitate social dumping are often those who employ labour and benefit from it, and they act politically accordingly. Those who bear the costs through lower bargaining power, greater job competition, or wage pressure are often workers who nevertheless do not vote accordingly—through ignorance or lack of awareness.

Tags: migration; wages; labour market; social dumping; bargaining power; political economy; electoral behaviour; mass immigration